



**Agroecology TPP**

Swiss Forum for Rural Agricultural Services (SFRAS)  
Theme: Innovation and MSD  
24 May 2023

# **Regreening Kenya by scaling asset-based community-driven development tools and processes:**

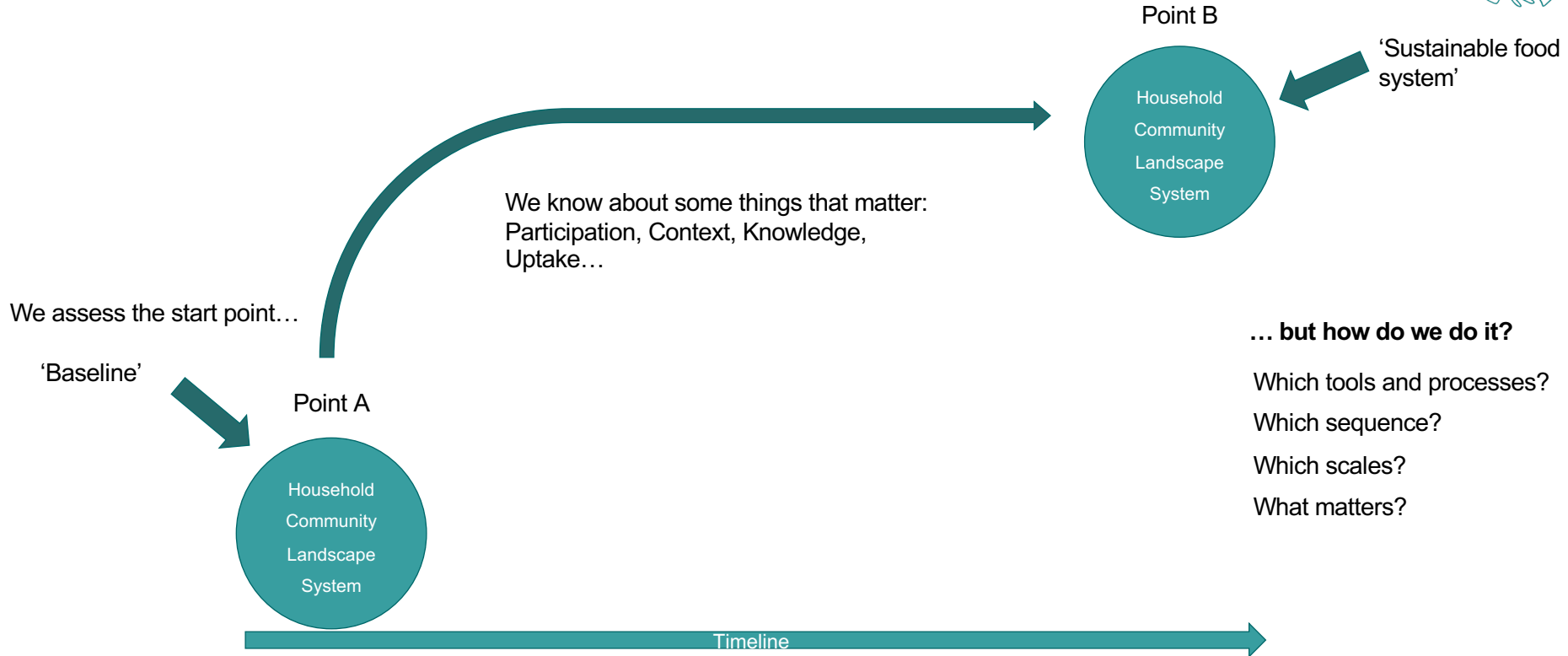
**On the importance of participatory processes and agency building to achieve sustainability in externally-funded agroecology projects**

Dr. Lisa Elena Fuchs  
CIFOR-ICRAF Social Systems and Engagement Scientist, ABCD team leader, Agroecology TPP scientific coordinator

# Contextualisation



We have an idea of where we want to go....



# Background: 'ABCD in Regreening' project



## Background

- Legacy: Build on ICRAF ABCD work (since 2011)
- Funding: Biovision Foundation, Switzerland
- Sites: Regreening Africa sites, Homa Bay, western Kenya
- Local partners: 30 community groups

## Outcome areas

- Farm-/practice-level: Behaviour change towards greater sustainability
- Process-level: Contextually suitable scalable community-driven approaches
- System-level: Institutional change towards institutionalization of proposed approaches

## Key research questions:

- Can the engagement process taken by external actors influence project participants' behaviour – and, if so, how?

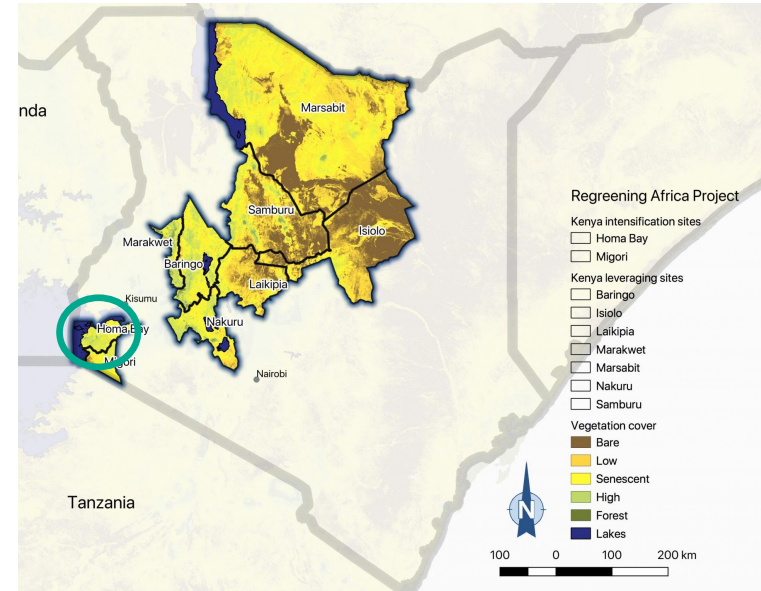
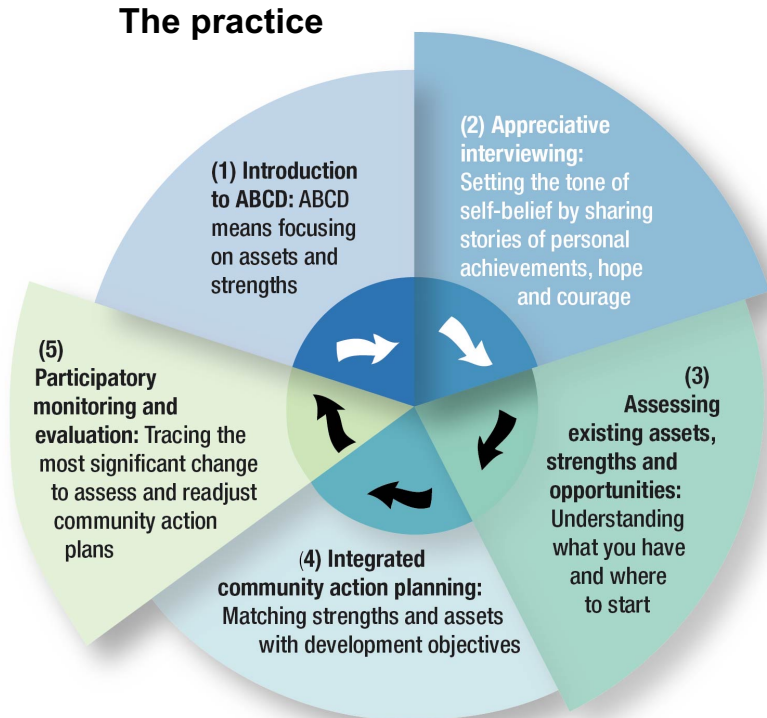


Figure: Regreening Africa sites in Kenya

# Process: Supporting agency and action



## The contribution claim

ABCD fosters **attitudinal** and **behavioural** changes:

### Attitudinal

- People realize what they have (**'asset mindset'**), and believe in their ability to influence their lives positively (**'sense of agency'**)

### Behavioural

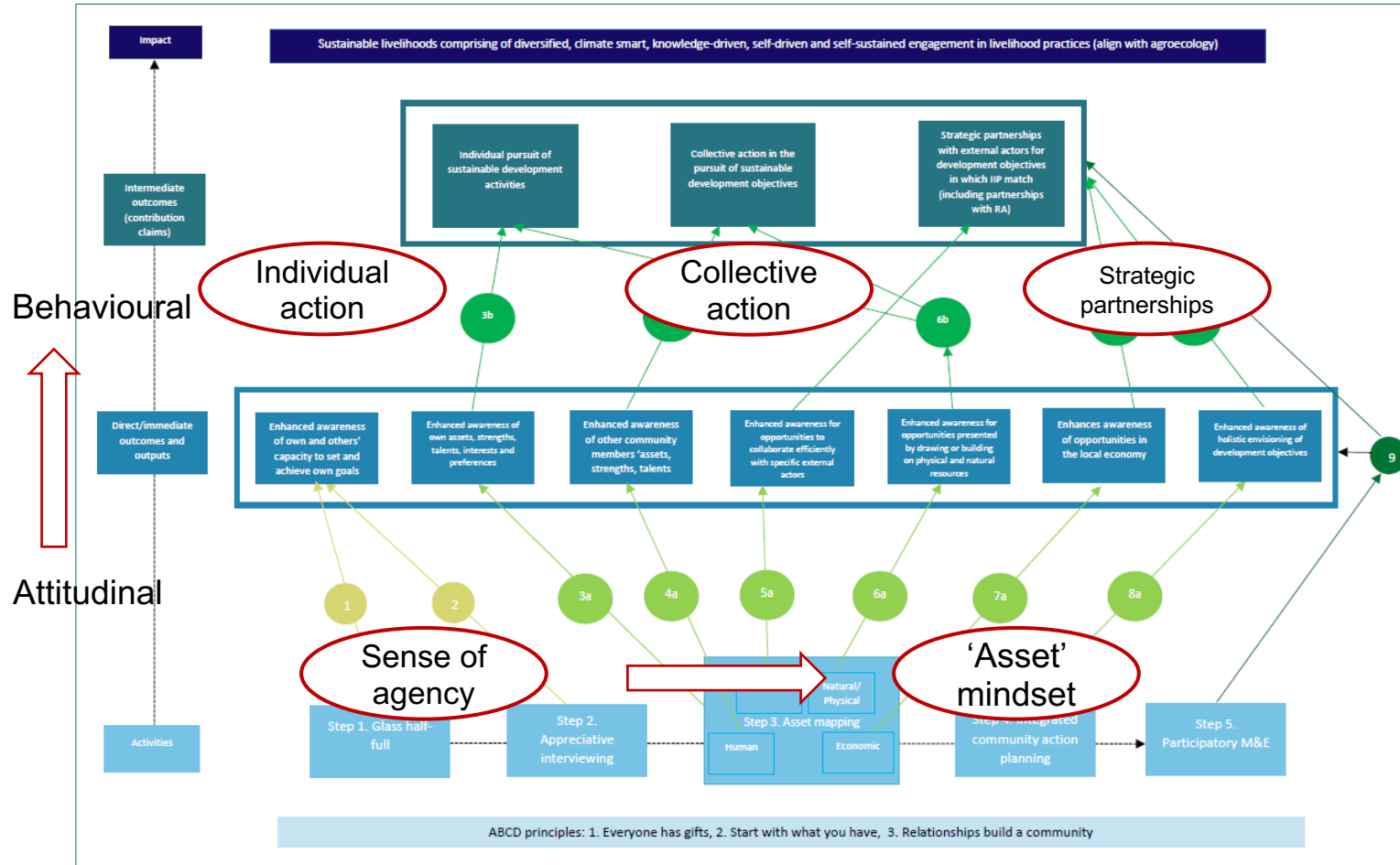
- People decide to start with what they have and use it better, and in a more coordinated way (**'individual action'**)
- People come together and use their social networks to find solutions within themselves (**'collective action'**)
- People use their social networks to find solutions by collaborating with external actors (**'strategic partnerships'**)

Beyond the tools, ABCD is an engagement process.





# Science: Realist contribution analysis to evidence that *process* matters





# Insights: ‘Seeing is believing’

Have a look at the first video from the ‘ABCD in Regreening’ project that focuses on individual agency and action:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o1yygev7mX4>



Also read: Fuchs, L. “*Start with what you have and where you are*”: ABCD. A new video and website are set to help communities plan and implement improvements in their livelihoods. Worldagroforestry News, 4 April 2022.

<https://worldagroforestry.org/blog/2022/05/04/start-what-you-have-and-where-you-are-abcd>



# Some summary observations

Partners' so-called ownership – an important ingredient for sustainability - depends on partners

- **Seeing** a problem and/or opportunity
- **Feeling** concerned by the problem and/or opportunity
- **Realising** they are able to do something about it ('sense of agency')
- **Being included** in identifying and defining solutions
- **Steering** implementation of proposed solutions

**Let's be mindful of and deliberate in how we *engage* relationships that foster partners' ownership.**

“Relationships move at the speed of trust but social change moves at the speed of relationships.”

Reverend Jennifer Bailey, the founder and executive director of the Faith Matters Network



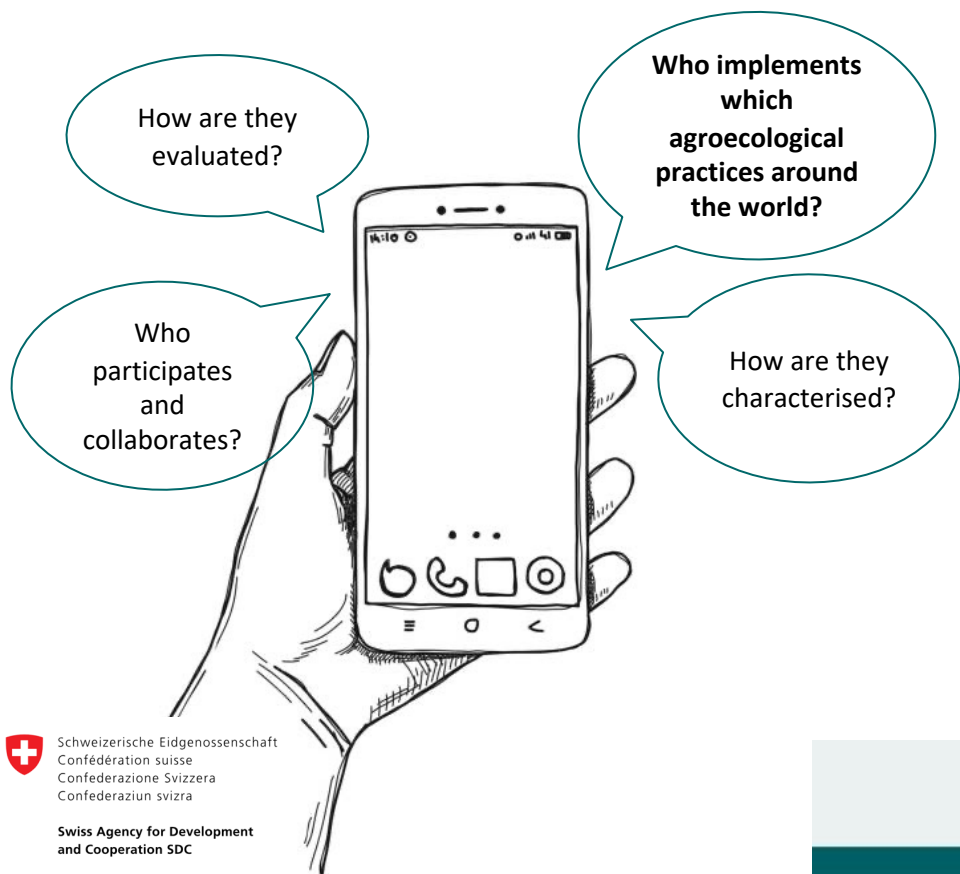
**“Most projects fail because you don’t get the people right (...). If you address what is not felt, you will not succeed”.**

Nicholas Syano (CEO, DNRC)





# Addition: Map Your Agroecology Citizen Science tool



## Inclusion by design

- **Digital tools** – app + web platform
- **Different languages** and ease of use
- Build in targeted **user motivation**

→ Build, and build on, **partnerships and their networks**

- 1) Define a globally demand-driven concept
- 2) Develop the actual tool
- 3) Popularize and use the tool

## ABCD in Regreening project

ICRAF's ABCD team: Lisa Fuchs, Levi Orero, Victoria Apondi, Lang'at Kipkorir, Irene Obumba, Esther Katito, Lilian Odhiambo, Ben Gudu

Partners: 30 community groups in Homa Bay, Kenya

Funders: Biovision Foundation

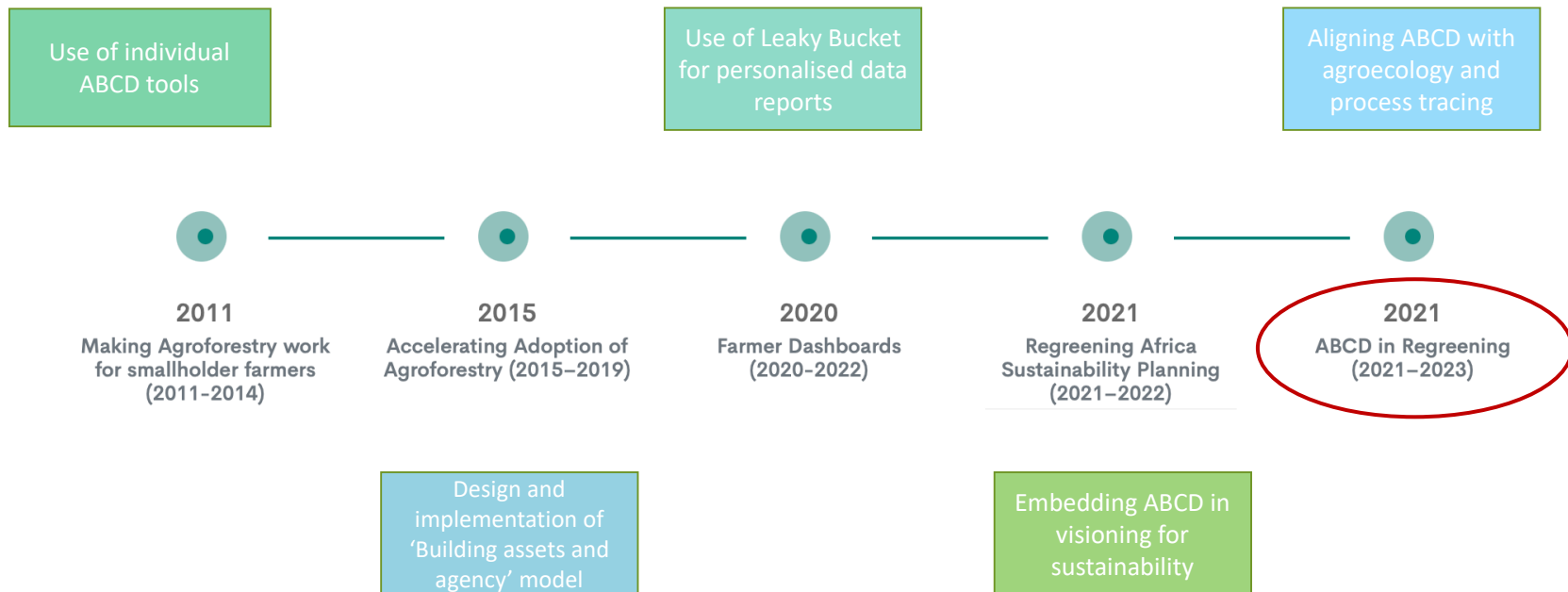
Thank you!

Please get in touch: [L.Fuchs@cifor-icraf.org](mailto:L.Fuchs@cifor-icraf.org)



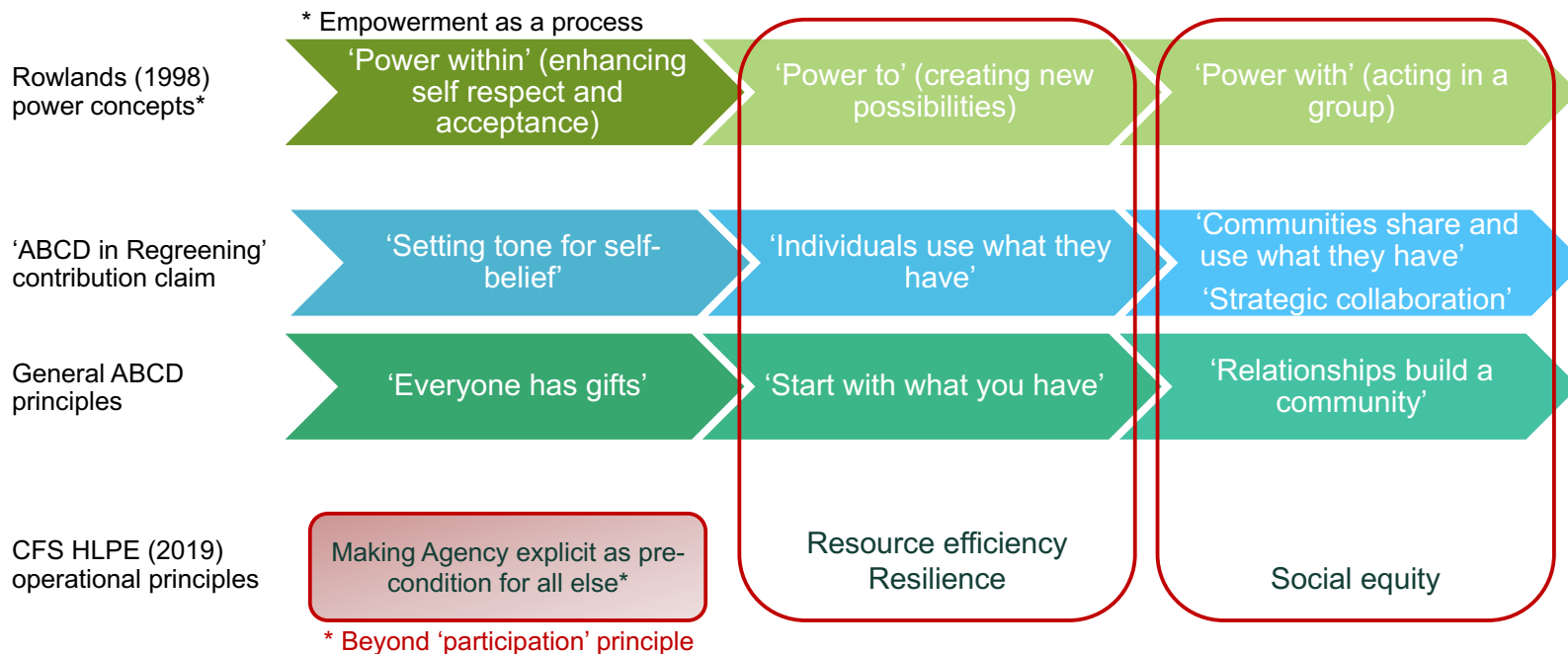


# The ABCD journey at CIFOR-ICRAF





# Conceptual alignment: ABCD and agroecology



# Conceptual responsiveness of 13 HLPE and 3 ABCD principles



# ‘Start with what you have’ – Agroecology in practice to build on

On-farm	Off-farm
Soil and water conservation	Participatory value chain analysis
Composting	Participatory market survey and linkages
Agroforestry	‘Farming as a business’ planning and literacy tools
Fish farming	Commodity-specific producer group support
Animal husbandry	‘Seeing is believing’ farm visits of model farmers
Crop husbandry	Village Savings and Loaning Associations (VSLA)
Poultry keeping/management	Regular ‘field clinics’ for demand-driven support
Bee keeping	Regular participatory M&E for structured self-reflection
Post-harvest training	



# ICRAF's ABCD manual

Foreword and introduction to the manual

Practical introduction and guidelines for the ABCD training contents:

- 1) Introduction to ABCD
- 2) Appreciative interviewing
- 3) Comprehensive asset assessment and mapping
- 4) Community action planning
- 5) Participatory M&E

Facilitation advice

References

Annexes



<http://www.worldagroforestry.org/publication/facilitating-asset-based-community-driven-abcd-approach-holistic-community-development>



RESEARCH  
PROGRAM ON  
Forests, Trees and  
Agroforestry



Global  
Landscapes  
Forum



Resilient  
Landscapes

# Regreening Africa Sustainability Planning guide

Introduction

Step 1: Identify and define the communities

Step 2: Community vision mapping

Step 3: Causal analysis

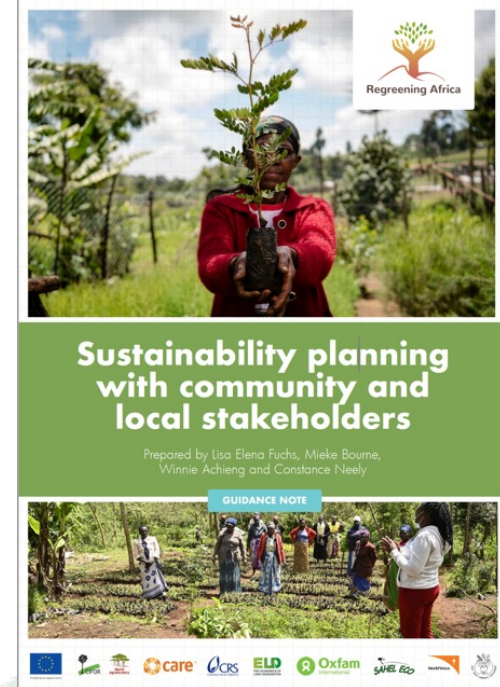
Step 4: Identify assets and stakeholders

- 1) Option 1: Human and social asset mapping
- 2) Option 2: Local economy assessment
- 3) Option 3: Natural and physical resource assessment and mapping

Step 5: Community action planning (adapted from ABCD)

Step 6: Supporting action plan implementation

Concluding remarks on process facilitation and implementation



[https://regreeningafrica.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Sustainability\\_Guidance\\_Note\\_Final.pdf](https://regreeningafrica.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Sustainability_Guidance_Note_Final.pdf)





# Resources

## ICRAF ABCD work

- **Fuchs, LE, Oremo, L, Ngoima, S., Kuyah, S., Neufeldt, H.** Asset-Based Adaptation Project Promotes Tree and Shrub Diversity and Above-Ground Carbon Stocks in Smallholder Agroforestry Systems in Western Kenya. *Frontiers in Forests and Global Change*, 2022, 4: 773170, 14 pp. <https://doi.org/10.3389/ffgc.2021.773170>
- **Fuchs, LE, Oremo, L, Apondi, VA, Kipkorir, L.** How to stop wasting money in international development: Using a structured group selection approach to counter procedural inefficiency. *World Development Perspectives*, 2021. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wdp.2021.100364>
- **Fuchs, L.E., Bourne, M., Achieng, W., Neely, C.** Sustainability planning with community and local stakeholders: Guidance Note, World Agroforestry (ICRAF), Nairobi: Kenya, 2021, 26 pp. [https://regreeningafrica.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Sustainability\\_Guidance\\_Note\\_Final.pdf](https://regreeningafrica.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Sustainability_Guidance_Note_Final.pdf)
- **Fuchs, LE, Kipkorir, L, Apondi, V, Oremo, L.** Facilitating an Asset-Based Community-Driven (ABCD) Approach for Holistic Community Development: A Manual for Community Organising, World Agroforestry (ICRAF), Nairobi: Kenya, 2020, 36 pp.
- **Fuchs LE, Peters B, Neufeldt H.** Identities, interests, and preferences matter: Fostering sustainable community development by building assets and agency in western Kenya. *Sustainable Development*. 2019; 1–9, <https://doi.org/10.1002/sd.1934>
- **Fuchs, LE, Oremo, L, Namoi, N, Neufeldt, H.** How to Effectively Enhance Sustainable Livelihoods in Smallholder Systems: A Comparative Study from Western Kenya. *Sustainability*. 2019, 11 (Special Issue Sustainable Development of Tropical Agriculture), 1564, <https://doi:10.3390/su11061564>
- **Fuchs, LE.** Bridging the divide in community development: The importance of process in linking community demands and responsive external support. *Coady Innovation Series*, (8), 2018, 11 pp., <https://coady.stfx.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/IS8.pdf>
- **Cunningham, G., Fuchs, LE, Oremo, L, Apondi, VA, Kipkorir, L.** The Integrated Household Leaky Bucket. Building financial and economic literacy by doing: A simple guide to help smallholder farmers separate their farm and household revenues and expenses. *Coady Innovation Series*, (14), 2018, <https://coady.stfx.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/IS14.pdf>



# The ABCD website (go to full screen mode to click on links)

Learn more about the work of the ABCD team by visiting the [new integrated website](#).

- Get an overview of the core concepts, the engagement processes, and the various tools that have been co-developed and implemented by the ABCD team since 2011.
- Explore the team's latest [publications](#) on ABCD to gain a more comprehensive understanding of what it is all about.
- Watch [videos](#) that feature stories and testimonials from communities about the ABCD process, tools and outcomes.
- Learn more about the various ABCD projects.
  - [Making Agroforestry Work for Smallholder Farmers](#) (2011–2014) that aimed to improve agroforestry knowledge and land-management practices in selected watersheds in Nyando River Basin while focusing on climate change.
  - [Triple A Project: Accelerating Adoption of Agroforestry in Western Kenya](#) (2015–2019) that used an ABCD approach to scale sustainable adoption of best practices in agroforestry and agriculture.
  - [Farmer-led Tools, Dashboard Development, and the Future of Farming](#) (2020–2022) that identifies participatory ways of collecting farm-level data, and pilots personalized data reports and feedback sessions to test how data can be made accessible to smallholders, especially women and girls, to improve their farming practices.
  - [Regreening Africa Sustainability Planning](#) (2021–2023) draws on the work of ICRAF's ABCD and [SHARED](#) teams. Their guidance note outlines six key steps to encourage and support sustained land restoration after project transition.
  - [ABCD in Regreening](#) (2021–2023), a strategic collaboration with the Regreening Africa project to support the adoption of promoted land-restoration practices alongside a more widely framed efficient, sustainable and circular resource use at individual and communal levels based on the 'start where you are, use what you have' principles.

